

PRAYER POINTS



We are living in troubling and very worrying times at present, which can result in feelings of loneliness and isolation. Everyone is experiencing problems which make it difficult to share our feelings because of not wanting to burden people even more, with our personal problems. It is now so important to gather strength from our faith, our love of God and from His love of us. We are not alone, God is with us. He is with us in our everyday tasks. He is with us in our sorrows and our joys. God is with us when we feel overwhelmed and even in the thick of activity we can quietly talk to Him and rejoice that He is there.

Pray: Lord open my eyes to your presence.
Open my ears to your call.
Open my heart to your love. Amen

Reflection:

Rejoice in the Lord in His presence. Know that you dwell in Him and He in you. Know that nothing can separate you from His love. In the quiet give thanks to God for your life and that He is with you no matter what. God offers His peace, His love, His forgiveness to you. All of this is for free, it cannot be earned, it is from God's grace. Seek God and you will find what you need comes with Him.

“The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases, His mercies never come to an end. They are new every morning, great is Your faithfulness. The Lord is my portion says my soul, therefore I will hope in Him.” Lam 3 22-24

From Sue Thackray

Newsletter and Plan

March to May 2021



Photograph taken by Rachel Marston

**KIRKBY STEPHEN, APPLEBY
& TEBAY METHODIST CIRCUIT**



Cumbria District (09/07)

‘Our mission is to know Jesus and make him known’

From the Manse

Great is Thy faithfulness, O God my Father
There is no shadow of turning with Thee,
Thou changest not, Thy compassion's they fail not
As Thou hast been Thou forever wilt be

As I walked through the front garden this morning, the green shoots of snowdrops and daffodils had emerged from under the snow, as it melted away. A sure sign of spring around the corner – signs of hope and new life. Hope has been a theme throughout this winter, with the wonderful silhouette of the 'Hope' of the Nativity at Newbiggin-on-Lune and the Nativities at Appleby and Orton (see the website or Facebook for photographs). In the Bible, a star led the way to the Hope of all mankind. Banners and posters with the verse "May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in Him" have been set up at many of our churches. What so many people need, especially at this time, is Hope! Like bulbs, lying in the ground, waiting in hope for spring and new life, so, as we wait in hope, God is at work in us to restore and renew. That's where the green shoots come in – the baby of Bethlehem is the sign of 'hope' and 'new life'. The baby grows and becomes the man, Jesus, who journeys to Jerusalem, is the Christ upon the Cross and the Resurrected Redeemer of Easter – as the Almighty power of God bursts forth on Easter Day. Hope has overcome despair; light has overcome darkness and life has overcome death. Hallelujah!



March to May will be a significant time in this area. The first signs of the 'Spring Harvest' of newborn lambs are already appearing; lambing time can be hard, but also joyful and, sometimes, sprinkled with sadness. The Lamb of God, Jesus Christ, dies that we may have life in all its fullness and become children of God. We pray that it may be possible to celebrate Easter together this year in worship; but we can celebrate Easter wherever we are – in church, chapel or home.



For many, it will be a time of emerging into a new world, a changed world, and so many will need to know the love and healing mercy of Jesus. In Luke chapter 10 vs 25 – 37 we read the story of the Good Samaritan – how people failed to stop and help the wounded, beaten and robbed traveller. But one man stops, stops what he is doing, notices, tends and treats every wound, before putting the man on his own donkey and taking him to a place of healing – at his own expense plus any extra costs as well.

Circuit Calendar

A number of regular Coffee Mornings and Prayer Meetings have not been shown on the calendar but will be advertised nearer the time if they are going ahead.

If you would like an event advertising please can you let Avril know.

May

8th 7.30pm Ravenstonedale Chapel Anniversary – "Cousins in common"

[All youth activities are on hold at the present time due to Coronavirus](#)

"Hub Club" - Alternate Thursdays during term time, 7.30 p.m.-9.00 p.m. at Kirkby Stephen

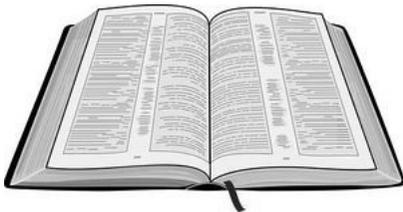
"Ignite" – a Bible Study/Discussion Group held at the home of Jonny and Debra Capstick for Year 12 and upwards. For more details please contact Jonny and Debra 015396 23141

"Valley Youth" - Worship group and speaker, followed by toast, age 13+
4th Saturday monthly 7.30 p.m. (except July, August, December) at Crosby Ravensworth

He is RISEN
on a hill far away
BELIEVE
stood an old rugged cross
He Lives HOPE
the stone was rolled away
Resurrection
He is RISEN indeed!

Lectionary

7 March	Exodus 20:1-17 Psalm 19 1 Corinthians 1:18-25 John 2:13-22
14 March	Numbers 21:4-9 Psalm 107:1-3, 17-22 Ephesians 2:1-10 John 3:14-21
21 March	Jeremiah 31:31-34 Psalm 51:1-12 or Psalm 119:9-16 Hebrews 5:5-10 John 12:20-33
28 March	Mark 11:1-11 or John 12:12-16 Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29 The Passion Isaiah 50:4-9a Psalm 31:9-16 Phil 2:5-11 Mark 14:1 – 15:47 or Mark 15:1-39 (40-47)
4 April	Acts 10:34-43 or Isaiah 25:6-9 Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24 1 Corinthians 15:1-11 or Acts 10:34-43 John 20:1-18 or Mark 16:1-8
11 April	Acts 4:32-35 Psalm 133 1 John 1:1 – 2:2 John 20:19-31
18 April	Acts 3:12-19 Psalm 4 1 John 3:1-7 Luke 24:36b-48
25 April	Acts 4:5-12 Psalm 23 1 John 3:16-24 John 10:11-18
2 May	Acts 8:26-40 Psalm 22:25-31 1 John 4:7-21 John 15:1-8
9 May	Acts 10:44-48 Psalm 98 1 John 5:1-6 John 15:9-17
16 May	Acts 1:15-17, 21-26 Psalm 1 1 John 5:9-13 John 17:6-19
23 May	Acts 2:1-21 or Ezekiel 37:1-14 Psalm 104:24-34, 35b Romans 8:22-27 or Acts 2:1-21 John 15:26-27; 16:4b-15
30 May	Isaiah 6:1-8 Psalm 29 Romans 8:12-17 John 3:1-17



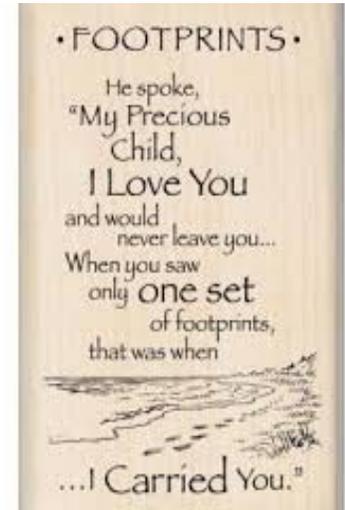
“Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light to my path.” Psalm 119 verse 105

“Blessed is the one who meditates on the word of the Lord.” Psalm 1

Imagine you are the traveller in need and the stranger (Samaritan) is Jesus. Jesus stops, sees, tends our wounds and our brokenness, bathes our wounds with oil and wine then lifts us up onto his own donkey and takes us to a place of healing, the Cross.

And, what if the traveller is someone we see in need – will we stop and lift the stranger up?

In America, during Christmas week, a police officer was called to a supermarket, to a lady caught stealing food. She had two children with her, and had never stolen before. But in the pandemic she had no money, no food, no way to eat at Christmas or presents for her children. The officer was told to arrest her, but instead he bought \$250 of vouchers from the store, gave them to her and she bought food and presents. He cautioned her and banned her from the store. A modern day ‘Good Samaritan’!



Jesus has no hands but ours, no feet but ours, He has given everything for us and He calls us to give our all for those in need.

We pray for an outpouring from God through us, to bring healing, peace, love, hope and joy that we may proclaim “Great is thy faithfulness oh God my Father, All I have needed thy hand hath provided”

May God bless you during April May and June, whilst Heather and I are on Sabbatical. We are not sure what it will bring, given the current situation but “God holds the key to all unknown and I am glad”.

May God bless you richly in Jesus’ Name.

Stephen and Heather



Nativity Display at Orton

Having attended some family worker forums giving ideas for our involvement in the Families Together Team (a sort of Messy Church event), I (Rachel) ended up having lots of ideas and discussion at home about how Chapel could engage with the community to make sure Christmas didn't feel as if it wasn't cancelled.

We asked others in the congregation about how we might display outside a Nativity, big enough to be seen and in particular for families to enjoy. Before we knew it John Bainbridge was building a stable and Rowland was cutting out silhouettes of each character in the Christmas story and wiring lights up to a tractor battery!



As Families Together were already distributing Nativity craft and challenge boxes to families in the Tebay Section, we picked up on their theme of adding a character to the display as the story unfolds week by week. The first week we had Mary



and Joseph journeying on a donkey across the adjacent Chapel field, flood lit at night. We had only had it in the field a couple of hours and a neighbour to the Chapel telephoned one of our congregation to say thank you and how she appreciated it. The following weeks brought Mary and Joseph arriving at the Stable and the birth of Jesus; the shepherds in the

field, with an angel; the shepherds arriving and then by Christmas Day the star appears in the field, guiding the Wise Men to find Jesus.

Anyone passing the Chapel was able to scan a QR code on the railings, which Scripture Union had developed, meaning they could watch a video message on their smart phone from characters in the story.

We hope the display at Orton Chapel inspired people as they passed by, to think about the true meaning of Christmas and provided hope in this difficult world we find ourselves in at the moment. Thank you, Rowland and Rachel Woof



The Lord is my Shepherd (Psalm 23)

We have been watching with fascination the TV coverage of the USA presidential election, the results, the refusal to believe or accept the results. So many people, with such completely diverging views, only listening or hearing to that which supports their own view. We pray for a peaceful transition and for President Joe Biden, vice-President Kamala Harris and the new administration for wisdom, grace and peace for all.

What informs our lives, our opinions and our actions? Is it the Spirit of God and His Word or the spirit of worldliness?

I found this article called Channel 23 (a bit tongue in cheek, but also challenging!).

The 23rd Channel

*The TV set is my Shepherd, my spiritual life shall want.
It maketh me to sit down and do nothing for His name's sake,
Because it requireth all my time.
It keepeth me from doing my duty as a Christian
Because it presenteth so many good shows that I must see.*

*It restoreth my knowledge of the things of the world.
It keepeth me from the study of God's word.
It leadeth me in the paths of failing to attend the evening worship services
And of doing nothing in the kingdom of God.*

*Yea, though I live to be a hundred,
I shall keep viewing my TV as long as it will work,
For it is my closest companion.
It's sounds and its pictures, they comfort me.
It presenteth entertainment before me and keepeth me from doing important things with my family.
It fills my head with ideas which differ from those set forth in the word of God.*

*Surely, no good thing will come of my life
Because my TV offereth me no good time to do the will of God.
Thus, though I dwell in the place of the redeemed, who have been washed in the blood of the Lamb,
I will let the souls around me slip into Hell for ever.*

God reminded me in a recent prophecy to listen to Him, to read His Word and let that Word be a lamp unto my feet and light to my pathway.

We also remember that when "The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want". What a promise!!

Rev Stephen

The Joy of Spending

yourself on behalf of others.

Upper Eden Food Bank aims to bring love, hope and help to families and individuals who are going through a difficult patch. Now, with lockdowns, job losses and school closures brought on by the Covid-19 pandemic, there are even more people who probably had not thought they would find themselves needing help from a food bank.

For the volunteers with UEFB it is a privilege and joy to help, as we receive from those to whom we deliver food parcels. There is much gratitude and warmth from recipients in the doorstep, socially-distanced conversations.

Over Christmas, and now during early 2021 lockdown, UEFB is again providing extra supplies, including a Christian book, Christmas treats and trees, books donated by their author, weekly fresh foods, toiletries and staples, for those children unable to attend school.

The majority of families are referred by schools or other agencies where incomes have been reduced or are now non-existent. Perhaps not everyone realises that when at school all Reception and Years 1 and 2 children have their school meals provided without charge, meaning children at home during lockdown causes extra expense. (Over 4000 lunches provided so far).

Of course, none of this would be possible without those who quietly donate, or volunteer behind the scenes doing so much. Giving during Covid-19 has been extraordinary, with the list of kindnesses too long to mention here.



A Preaching Pilgrimage

When I look back on my spiritual journey I realise afresh what an incredible adventure it has been. A pilgrimage full of books and poetry, amazing people, an enormous variety of worship experiences; training days, deep discussions, meditation, writing long essays, disappointments and wonderful times of divine intervention. Any spiritual safari involves lots of prayer, delving deep into God's word, becoming very close to him and also some dry, wilderness times.

My trek towards preaching has been a long one. It was in 1984 that I began the lay preachers' course as a member of the United Reformed Church and began preaching 3 years later. In 1990, having moved house, I joined a large, Anglican Church and served as a Worship leader. In 1995 we moved yet again and joined another church, which although the same denomination was quite different. Our Vicar asked me if I would consider preaching and a 3 year course followed through which, again, I learned so much more. And so... I continue to learn.

This is an exciting time for me and I want to thank everyone of you, for all the blessings I have received. Preaching is an enormous privilege. Thank you.

Joyce Worsfold, January 2021

Joyce will have undertaken her final interview for full accreditation as a Local Preacher when you read this. Please pray for Joyce and for all of our Local Preachers at this time.

Stephen

Ordination Update

I thought I would update you on ordination this year. The plan is still for ordination to take place on 18th April in Methodist Central Hall, Westminster. Due to the severity of the Covid 19 situation there will be some uncertainty around this event.

Given the recent figures, I recommend that people stay at home rather than coming to the event in April, even if it goes ahead. I know and am thankful of all the support received from the circuit, and appreciate your prayers as decisions are made (and for the ordination when it happens.).

Andrew

Chairman of the District

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Staff Rest Days**Ministers**

Rev Stephen Radford	Friday
Rev Andrew Sterling	Saturday

Circuit Administrator

Mrs Avril Swinbank	Saturday, Sunday, Monday
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Circuit Connexion Services

There will be 6:30 p.m. Connexion services held online in March and April on the evening of the second Sunday in the month, and in May on the first Sunday of the month with coffee chat rooms afterwards. The Zoom details for these will be sent out by an email link nearer the time.

Website Addresses**Circuit Website**

Methodist Church Website www.ksaandtcircuit.org.uk
 Cumbria District Methodist Website www.methodist.org.uk
 HOW link [www.cumbriamethodistdistrict.org.uk](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC6iZVadGymIBC04aEEOJryw)
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC6iZVadGymIBC04aEEOJryw>

Please look at the website for latest news and also reflections from lockdown.



If you are on Facebook please "Like" our Kirkby Stephen, Appleby Tebay Methodist Circuit page and keep up to date with our latest news!